

To: Delta Vision Task Force members
From: John Kirlin
Subject: Developing a draft Task Force "durable vision for sustainable management of the Delta"
Date: September 20, 2007

On August 31 you provided guidance to staff which resulted in preparation of the "embryonic" draft vision for the Task Force. You are scheduled to adopt your final recommended vision on November 30, 2007 and to make preliminary recommendations at your next meeting, October 25-26, 2007.

This is a brief report on the "embryonic draft" prepared by staff and posted on the Delta Vision web site September 12. The posted draft included prominent statements on a cover page and in a footer on each page to the effect that this is a staff work product and the Task Force will recommend its vision on November 30, 2007.

In developing the embryonic draft now available for review, staff sought to:

- meet the principles regarding style which you adopted
- meet the other direction you gave regarding specific elements to include, such as an early summary
- feature the main recommendation of August, that water and ecosystem be co-equal and of highest value
- recognize the importance you gave to the Delta as a place and to governance in your discussions
- incorporate your views and language as understood
- address as many of the requirements of EO S-17-06 as possible
- achieve a relatively integrated presentation

This guidance provided on August 31 served to allow development of the embryonic draft which now provides a concrete example of a possible vision upon which to build.

This draft includes many elements of a vision, as identified below. For each such element, page numbers and lines in the brackets to indicate where the concept, if not the actual language, is found in the embryonic draft vision.

- The premise of EO S-17-06 is echoed by many: the current condition and uses of the Delta are unsustainable [pg. 2, lines 9-19; pg. 4, lines 32-45 and pg. 5, lines 1-8]
- The ecosystem and the water supply system are of co-equal value to the State of California [pg. 2, lines 19-29; pg. 10, lines 18-22]
- The Delta is complex and much uncertainty exists about its operations and the effects of possible new policies or infrastructure [pg. 5, lines 23-28; pg. 9, lines 37-42]

- The Delta is part of an estuary, and is unique in the world as an inverted estuary [pg. 4 lines 3-30] but is so altered by human action that it cannot return to a past "natural" state [pg. 9, lines 44-46 and pg. 10, lines 1-3]
- California should design for resiliency in both water systems and ecosystem protection rather than one best solution [pg. 2, lines 31-38; pg. 10, lines 42-46 and pg. 11, lines 1-6; pg. 11, lines 17-38; pg. 14, lines 2-8]
- The Delta is a unique place with value in its own right [pg. 10, lines 24-29]
- The state as a whole must reduce reliance on the Delta as a water source and increase regional self sufficiency; there is too much reliance on the Delta for water conveyance and while the Delta must remain an important feature for providing water to the state, it must not be the sole transfer point in conveyance systems [page 12, lines 4-18].
- A greater physical or operational separation between water supply and ecosystem functions is needed [pg. 12, lines 20-39]. Moving toward that separation will require flexibility, reversibility and capacity to change [pg. 12, lines 27-29] and will require performance standards for its operation [pg. 12, lines 29-30].
- Action-based decision making (adaptive management) needs to be incorporated into any Delta Vision. [pg. 9, lines 40-42; pg 10, lines 1-3; pg. 11, lines 1-2; pg. 12, lines 32-29]
- The current governance system cannot meet the challenges of protecting the Delta ecosystem or reliably delivering water for the future; new institutions, policies, financing systems and distributions of liabilities are needed. [pg. 2, lines 40-46; pg. 9, lines 9-21; pg. 14, lines 25-44; pg. 15, lines 1-16]
- Land uses should also be resilient, including keeping housing developments out of flood-prone areas [pg.14, lines 10-16]
- Middle ground recommendations (e.g., earthquake repairable levees rather than earthquake proof levees) may be what are needed, depending upon the results of cost analyses. [pg. 2, lines 31-38; pg. 10, lines 5-9; pg. 12, lines 32-39]